

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 07588 01 OF 02 031534Z

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EPG-02 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01

H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01

PM-04 USIA-06 OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

ACDA-07 PA-01 PRS-01 /116 W

-----031632Z 111088 /43

R 031518Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7925

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 07588

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, GW

SUBJECT: SPD ENERGY FORUM

REF: A. BONN 7341; B. BONN A-125

1. SUMMARY: WITH GREAT PASSION, SUPPORTERS AND
OPPONENTS OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS ARGUED FOR THEIR
POSITIONS AT A TWO-DAY, SPD-SPONSORED ENERGY FORUM IN
COLOGNE. TOP SPD GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LABOR UNION
LEADERS PLEADED FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE GOVERN-
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PAGE 02 BONN 07588 01 OF 02 031534Z

MENT'S NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN
ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EVENTUALLY ACHIEVE FULL EMPLOY-
MENT, WHILE OPPONENTS QUESTIONED THE SAFETY OF NUCLEAR
POWER AND THE EFFICACY OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AS A MEANS
TO ATTAIN FULL EMPLOYMENT. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE
DEBATE, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT STRESSED THE FRG'S NEED
FOR THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER AT HOME AND THE EXPORT

OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS ABROAD TO CREATE JOBS AND MAINTAIN THE COUNTRY'S POSITION AS A LEADER IN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY. NO CONSENSUS WAS REACHED, BUT THE STRONG OPPOSITION EVINCED AT THE CONFERENCE INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR 30,000 EMW BY 1985 WILL NOT BE REALIZED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONFERENCE, ENTITLED "ENERGY, EMPLOYMENT, AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE," HELD APRIL 28-29, WAS FORESEEN AS A FORUM AT WHICH THE CURRENT DEBATE ABOUT NUCLEAR ENERGY COULD BECOME MORE OBJECTIVE AND LESS EMOTIONAL. THE SPD ORGANIZED THIS FORUM LAST NOVEMBER IN RESPONSE TO GRASS ROOTS CONCERN ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY PROGRAM. MANY NON-SPD MEMBERS FROM THE ACADEMIC WORLD, CHURCHES, LABOR UNIONS, AND CITIZENS' INITIATIVES PARTICIPATED, SO THE PARTY LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND THAT THE CONFERENCE COULD NOT PASS ANY RESOLUTIONS.

3. THREE GROUPS WERE REPRESENTED IN COLOGNE:

--SPD GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LABOR UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY PROGRAM AND ENERGY R AND D PROGRAM (SEE REF A);

--OPPONENTS TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY PROGRAM WITHIN THE SPD AND THEIR SUPPORTERS FROM ACADEMIA;
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PAGE 03 BONN 07588 01 OF 02 031534Z

--LEADERS OF THE BURGERINITIATIVEN (CITIZENS INITIATIVES), WHO CALLED FOR A HALT TO FURTHER NUCLEAR POWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION AND A SHUTDOWN OF EXISTING FACILITIES.

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WITH THE STATEMENT THAT THE FRG WOULD SUFFER AN ACUTE ENERGY SHORTAGE AND ECONOMIC CRISIS BY 1985 IF NUCLEAR CAPACITY IS NOT INCREASED. EPPLER, SPD PARTY CHIEF IN BADEN-WURTTENBURG AND SPOKESMAN FOR THE SPD OPPONENTS, QUESTIONED THE GOVERNMENT'S ARGUMENT THAT ECONOMIC GROWTH WOULD CREATE NEW JOBS, CITING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE PAST FEW YEARS WHICH HAD LED TO INCREASED PRODUCTION WITH FEWER JOBS.

4. PRESIDENT CARTER'S ENERGY PROGRAM WAS THE OBJECT OF MUCH DISCUSSION AT THE CONFERENCE, AND WAS HELD OUT AS A MODEL FOR THE FRG BY THE EPPLER GROUP, BUT SCHMIDT NOTED THAT IN CONTRAST TO THE US, THE FRG IS

AN ENERGY-POOR COUNTRY. NEVERTHELESS, HE ADDED,
CARTER INTENDS TO BUILD 70 MORE NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
IN THE US; ALSO, MOST OF CARTER'S ENERGY CONSERVATION
MEASURES ARE ALREADY BEING PRACTICED IN THE FRG. HE
DISAGREED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO DECLARE A
MORATORIUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAST BREEDER
REACTOR, BECAUSE BREEDER TECHNOLOGY WOULD MULTIPLY

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 07588

THE ENERGY VALUE OF THE URANIUM THE FRG USES. HE
AGAIN EXPRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO WORK FOR STRONGER
INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS ON THE EXPORT OF NUCLEAR
TECHNOLOGIES, BUT MAINTAINED THAT IT WOULD BE FOOLISH
FOR THE FRG TO UNILATERALLY DENY ITSELF SUCH AN IMPORT-

ANT MARKET.

5. COMMENT: THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS DID SHOW
BROAD AGREEMENT FOR THE ABSTRACT IDEAS OF ENERGY
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PAGE 02 BONN 07588 02 OF 02 031531Z

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY-SAFE TECHNOLOGIES,
INCREASED USE OF DOMESTIC COAL, AND THE USE OF WASTE
HEAT FROM POWER PLANTS TO OPERATE LARGE-SCALE CENTRAL
HEATING SYSTEMS. ALL AGREED THAT THE PRIME GOAL WAS
FULL EMPLOYMENT, AND THAT NUCLEAR POWER, WITH ITS
UNCERTAIN RISKS, SHOULD BE USED "AS LITTLE AS
POSSIBLE." THIS PHRASE, HOWEVER, ONLY PAPERS OVER
THE DIFFERING ASSUMPTIONS OF THE TWO GROUPS IN THE
SPD. PAST PREDICTIONS BY THE GOVERNMENT THAT A
NUCLEAR CAPACITY OF ONLY 20,000 EMW BY 1985 WOULD
RESULT IN ANOTHER 1.5 MILLION UNEMPLOYED BY 1990 MAKE
IT CLEAR THAT, FOR THE GOVERNMENT, "AS LITTLE AS
POSSIBLE" MUST MEAN "AS MUCH AS CAN POSSIBLY BE
ACHIEVED" OVER THE OPPOSITION OF THE COURTS, CITIZENS'
INITIATIVES, AND THE DISSENTERS WITHIN THE SPD. YET IT
SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT GIVEN THE PRESENT OPPOSITION
THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE MORE THAN
20,000 EMW CAPACITY BY 1985.

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